

THE SCORPENOID FISH, *NEOSEBASTES ENTAXIS*, AS
THE TYPE OF A DISTINCT GENUS.

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The description and figure by Jordan and Starks of their *Neosebastes entaxis*^a recalled the interest which the description of the typical *Neosebastes* aroused in me many years ago. I have consequently examined the newly added species, and the examination has convinced me of the aptness of the authors' suggestion that their species "may represent a new genus."

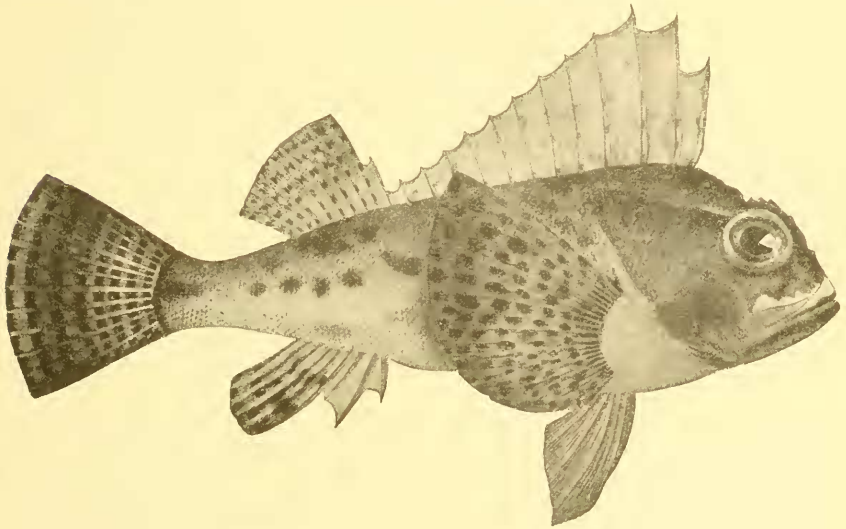


FIG. 1.—*NEOSEBASTES SCORPENOIDES*. (AFTER MCCOY.)

In most respects there is essential agreement between *N. scorpenoides* and *N. entaxis*, but the latter does not possess those characters which were used to differentiate the genus. An excellent figure and description have been published by Sir F. McCoy,^b and they give the means of comparison between the two.

The *Neosebastes scorpenoides* has the body most convex near the nape, and the rest of the back nearly rectilinear tailwards; the pectoral fins have the "upper rays longest" and the "lower rays branched," the

^aProc. U. S. Nat. Mus., XXVII, 1904, p. 120.

^bNatural History of Victoria (pl. cxviii).

lower one nearly or quite simple;" the spinous part of the dorsal has the anterior spines slowly graduated (third longest), and the connecting membrane between all the rays is only slightly emarginated and not notched; the membrane between the anal spines is also merely notched.

The *Neosebastes entaxis* has the body most convex far behind the head and above the stomachal area, the back with only the last half rectilinear tailwards; the pectoral fins have rounded margins (the seventh and eighth rays being longest), and the lower ones (8) are unbranched; the spinous part of the dorsal has the first three spines rapidly graduated, and the connecting membrane between all is more or less deeply notched; the membrane behind the first and second anal spines is also deeply notched.

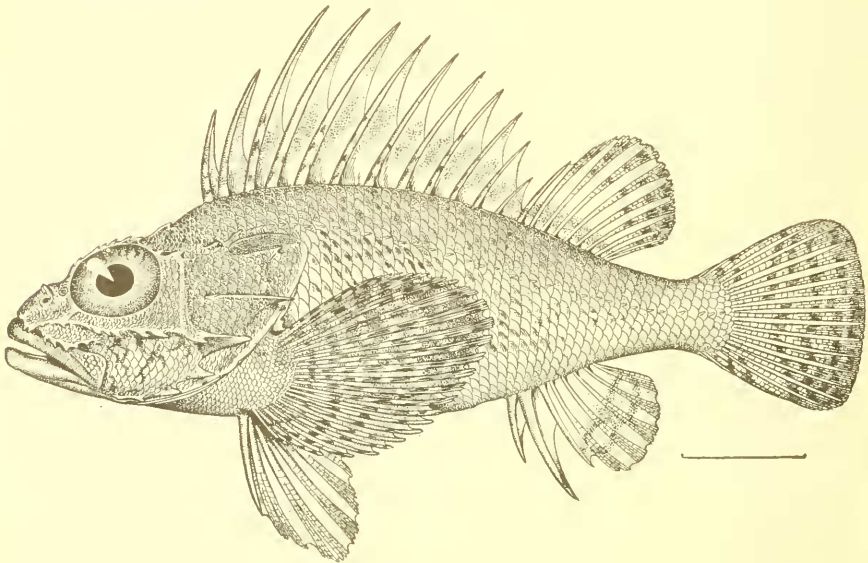


FIG. 2.—NEOSEBASTES ENTAXIS.

In fact, the difficulty of discrimination between the *N. entaxis* and its relatives is not so much between it and *N. scorpaenoides* as between it and *Sebastes* and its near affines. From all such, however, the species is separated by characters which it shares with *N. scorpaenoides* and which, indeed, led Jordan and Starks to refer it to the same genus: "Suborbital stay and preopercle with a row of strong hooked spines; dorsal spines very strong and long." The combination of all these characters, however, isolates the fish in question as the type of an independent genus.

The genus thus indicated may be named *Sebastesemus*, from *σεβαστος*, august, elevated, and *σημα*, battle banner, in allusion to the high ranked dorsal spines. The name is thus assimilated to many other genera of the family.

The only known species is the *Sebastesemus entaxis*.